

South Wilmington Projects, Activities and Research As Of November, 2008

List of Studies and Reports:

- **Southbridge Street Tree Inventory** (December 2004)
 - Inventory of number, health and condition of street trees
- **South Wilmington Brownfield Inventory** (January 2005)
 - Inventory and catalogue of likely brownfield sites
- **Southbridge Underutilized Property Inventory and Utilization Plan** (July 2005)
 - Inventory of vacant and underutilized properties
- **South Wilmington Socioeconomic Profile** (November 2005)
 - Report of existing social and economic conditions
- **South Wilmington Environmental Profile** (August 2006)
 - Report of existing environmental conditions
- **South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan** (July 2006)
 - Community driven recommendations for land use, transportation, retail and housing
- **Southbridge Drainage Study** (September 2006)
 - Comprehensive study and report
- **South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan Implementation Workshop** (October 2006)
 - Strategies developed by stakeholders for implementing the Neighborhood plan
- **South Wilmington SAMP Wetland Assessment Report** (June 2007)
 - Study of existing conditions of the South Wilmington Wetland
- **Southbridge Circulation Study** (September 2008)
 - Results of a traffic study and recommendations for solving traffic issues

Housing Affordability, Maintenance and Development Projects

Community Façade Program

With the support of Councilperson Hanifa Shabazz, a select number of homes will receive shutters and awnings as a part of the beautification efforts taking place on New Castle Ave and S. Heald Street in Southbridge.

Project lead: Councilwoman Hanifa Shabazz

Outcome: Beautification of New Castle Ave and S. Heald St.

Status: This program is currently awaiting the delivery of supplies and was scheduled to be implemented in the Spring 08.

Interfaith Housing Project at B & Townsend St.

The construction of 10 new townhomes along the residential corridor of B and Townsend streets in Southbridge began in the Fall of 2007. The townhomes will be sold to qualified lower-income families. The development will help reduce the number of vacant lots and complement historical structures in the neighborhood.

Project leads: Interfaith Housing Coalition Delaware

Outcome: 10 new townhomes will replace previously vacant housing and will provide homeownership opportunities for local residents.

Status: Information about the availability and affordability of these homes is currently being distributed in Wilmington.

Home Repair Help for Qualifying Residents

During the week of July 21-28, 2008 free materials and labor was provided to qualifying homeowners for the purpose of interior and exterior home repairs. Home repairs will include general carpentry, such as porch repair and wheelchair ramps, drywall and painting.

Project leads: St. Paul's United Methodist Church and Group Workcamps Foundation

Outcome: Home repairs

Status: Project is complete.

Retail, Employment and Community Services Projects

Main Street Assessment

The National Trust for Historic Preservation will be conducting a site visit in Southbridge in Fall/Winter 2008 to determine its eligibility for the National Trust's Main Street Program. The Main Street Program uses historic preservation as a tool to develop strategies of business retention and expansion and to recruit new businesses. SAMP implementation funds will be used for this visit.

Project Lead: DNREC Delaware Coastal Programs and DEDO Main Street Program

Outcome: The visit is scheduled for December 2008

Southbridge Community Benefits Agreements

A committee including the Southbridge Civic Association, community churches, civic leaders and community non-profit organizations, with legal assistance from the Widener Law Clinic, have worked with two local developers to negotiate Community Benefit Agreements for development projects – the first agreement of their kind in Delaware.

Project Lead: Southbridge Civic Association

Outcome: Signed Community Benefit Agreements that ensure that development benefits residents of Southbridge.

Status: Two agreements have been signed to date that outline job opportunities for local residents, truck traffic patterns, allowable businesses, complains resolutions etc. This has set the standard for future development in the area.

PAID Apprenticeship Program

PAID offers educational and training opportunities for residents interested in pursuing a career in the labor, hospitality and transportation industries. This effort was funded in part with SAMP implementation dollars.

Project lead: Councilwoman Hanifa Shabazz

Outcome: The first class graduated in Fall, 2007. A second class was held in Spring 2008.

Status: Program is now on-going and subject to continuing availability of funding.

Christina Crossing Retail Center

In February 2007, the City of Wilmington announced the construction of a ShopRite grocery store in Christina Crossing. Upon the anticipated completion date of Fall 2008, this grocery store will be approximately 70,000 square feet and maintains the potential to bring approximately 160 new jobs to the area. In addition to the ShopRite supermarket space, another 50,000 square feet of retail space will be available when the project is completed.

Project Leads: Buccini/Pollin Group

Outcome: New shopping center in South Wilmington

Status: As of October 2008, this project remains under construction.

Southbridge Hope Zone

The Wilmington Hope Commission seeks to improve the effectiveness of the social service, law enforcement, education, recreational, and cultural programs available to City residents and chose Southbridge as their first Hope Zone. The Hope Zone provides youth employment, recreational opportunities and counseling for residents of Southbridge.

Project lead: Hope Commission, The City of Wilmington, Elbert-Palmer Elementary School, Neighborhood House, and Henrietta Johnson Medical Center

Outcome: A safe neighborhood

Status: This project is currently continuing its collaborations with local nonprofits and is also working with Southbridge Civic Association with the intention of reaching more of the community's residents. To date, it has helped sponsor youth employment programs, safe haven programs, expanded recreation hours, expanded community policing and has placed a family crises counselor at Elbert Palmer Elementary.

Parks, Open Space and Environmental Quality Projects

Southbridge Welcome Sign

Many neighborhoods in Wilmington have features that indicate that you have entered a specific neighborhood – no such features existed in South Wilmington. A welcome sign was erected at the northern entrance to the community as a first step to neighborhood welcome features. The sign was funded with SAMP funding.

Project Leads: City of Wilmington, DNREC Coastal Programs

Outcome: Sign was installed Spring 2008.

South Wilmington Drainage Study

The South Wilmington Drainage Study is one of the 6 major components of the SAMP. This study was a preliminary assessment of drainage conditions and sewer system conditions within South Wilmington. The study provides recommendations for drainage improvement projects and provides cost estimates for those projects. This project was funded with SAMP funding.

Project leads: City of Wilmington, DNREC Coastal Programs
Consultant: RK&K Engineering

Outcome: Written report.

Status: This project is complete. The report has been distributed and can be accessed on the SAMP website.

Sewer Inspections and Clean-Out

The network of sanitary, storm and combined sewers in South Wilmington were cleaned out during summer/fall 2007. About 15,000 feet of pipes have been cleaned, removing 100 tons of accumulated grit and debris. The sewer system has been inspected with special cameras and repairs will be made as necessary.

Project lead: City of Wilmington Public Works Department
Camp Dresser & McKee, Engineer
Mobile Dredging & Pumping, Contractor

Outcome: Unclogged pipes and fewer incidences of minor street flooding.

Status: Most pipes have been cleaned. Inspections are complete.
Some pipes need the ditch to the tide gate on the east side dredged so that they can drain.

Drainage Ditch Improvement – New Castle Ave to Tide Gate “E”

As recommended by the South Wilmington Drainage Study, accumulated sediment will be removed from the ditch that runs from New Castle Ave. to the tide gate near Christina Ave (just north of I-495). The malfunctioning tide gate will also be replaced. This work will help alleviate some flooding problems that occur near New Castle Ave and D Sts.

Project Lead: New Castle County Conservation District (with funding from State 21st Century Fund)

Outcome: Infrastructure improvements and decreased flooding.

Status: Project is complete.

Drainage Ditch Improvement – Walnut Street

In conjunction with the construction of the shopping center on Howard St. between Walnut and Market Streets, the Walnut Street ditch which drains into the South Wilmington Wetland will be improved as part of required stormwater management for the site.

Project Lead: City of Wilmington
Consultant: RK&K

Outcome: Improved ditch and improved water quality.

Status: Planning and construction are underway.

Assessment of the Ecology and Hydrology of the South Wilmington Wetland

The wetland assessment describes the existing ecological functions of the South Wilmington Wetland and discusses opportunities to improve habitat. It describes the hydrological conditions in the wetland, including information about tidal influence and direction of flow. It also includes an inspection report of three tide gates and recommendations for fixing the gates. This project was funded by SAMP funds.

Project Lead: DNREC Coastal Programs
Consultant: RK&K Engineering

Outcome: Written Report.

Status: This project is complete. The report has been distributed and can be accessed on the SAMP website.

Delineation of the South Wilmington Wetland

The exact boundaries of the South Wilmington Wetland are being mapped out, as recommended by several studies. It is important to know and understand the exact boundary of the wetland area to determine what permits will be necessary for work in the wetland and to know where surrounding construction activities can and cannot take place.

Project Lead: City of Wilmington
Consultant: RK&K Engineering

Outcome: Report and maps.

Status: This project is complete.

Review of Site Investigation Reports for the South Wilmington Marsh

During the summer of 2007, DNREC Site Investigation Branch and Delaware Coastal Programs staff located and compiled all site investigation reports that currently exist for parcels of land within the South Wilmington wetland. The Site Investigation reports contain information regarding contaminant levels and in some cases, recommendations for fixing the contamination problem.

Project Lead: DNREC Site Investigation Branch and DNREC Delaware Coastal Programs

Outcome: Compilation of reports. Reports are available from Coastal Programs in electronic format.

Status: Project is complete. Next steps may involve hiring a consultant to analyze the information that was collected.

Grant Application for Brownfield Grant from EPA

Delaware Coastal Programs submitted an application to the EPA to receive funding in the amount of \$200,000 for further assessment and testing of parcels within the South Wilmington Wetland. Additional investigation and testing is necessary before improvements can be planned.

Project Lead: DNREC Delaware Coastal Programs

Outcome: Funding source.

Status: The grant application was not successful, but we will reapply in November 2008

Streets, Traffic, Safety and Community Facilities Projects

Streetscape Enhancements

Southbridge has many large street trees that provide a sense of neighborhood and provide shade, but many are too large and have not been well maintained over the years. Many of the trees are in poor health, falling branches pose a hazard for parked cars and root systems have caused sidewalk damage. Grant funding obtained from the Delaware Urban Forestry program and the Delaware Community Environmental Project Fund was used to conduct this work.

Project lead: DNREC Coastal Programs

Outcome: A healthy “urban forest”

Status: 130 trees were pruned, 16 trees removed and 41 trees planted in 2006-2007. Additional streetscaping work will be conducted when recommendations from the Circulation Study can be implemented.

Southbridge Circulation Study

The Wilmington Metropolitan Area Council (WILMAPCO) conducted a traffic circulation study in Southbridge to address concerns of residents over speeding traffic and truck traffic. As part of the study, three community meetings were held to get feedback and opinions from residents. The report contains a series of recommendations the WILMAPCO will help implement in the next several years. The study was funded by SAMP and WILMAPCO funding.

Project lead: WILMAPCO

Outcome: A report detailing traffic concerns and containing recommendations.

Status: Final report complete September, 2008. Several recommendations have already been implemented including: realigning traffic lights, retiming traffic lights to encourage slower speeds, restriping lanes, restriping crosswalks and bus route changes have been submitted to DART.

Southbridge Safe Routes to School Program

The Safe Routes to School program is designed to decrease traffic and pollution and to improve the health of children and the community. It promotes walking and biking to work and has funding available to improve safe biking and walking to neighborhood schools.

Project Lead: WILMAPCO and Elbert Palmer Elementary School.

Outcome: Improved pedestrian routes to the Elbert Palmer School.

Status: WILMAPCO is currently working with Elbert Palmer School to develop a plan to obtain funding to improve crosswalks and sidewalks in the vicinity of the school.